

Week Ending Friday, September 29, 2000

### **The President's Internet Address**

*September 22, 2000*

Good afternoon. We Americans are truly fortunate to be living at such an exciting time. Computers and the Internet are revolutionizing the way we work, live, relate to each other and the rest of the world. They also have the potential to fundamentally transform and improve the way Government serves the American people. Today I want to talk about a major step we're taking toward that goal.

When I became President, there were only 50 websites on the entire World Wide Web. Today, there are almost 20 million. Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, we've made great progress bringing Government into the digital age. Instead of waiting in line, citizens can go on-line, to file their taxes, compare their Medicare options, and find good jobs. They can tap into the latest health research, change their address at the post office, and follow along with NASA's missions in outer space. And they can do it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

But with 27 million web pages of Government information now on-line and more added every day, finding the information or service you need can be frustrating. That's why I'm pleased to announce that today we're launching a new, one-stop website for Federal on-line information: [firstgov.gov](http://firstgov.gov). It allows you, for the first time, to link to the Federal Information Service, or service you are looking for, without having to know the name of the agency or the program that offers it.

So, go to [www.firstgov.gov](http://www.firstgov.gov), and you're just a few mouse clicks away from websites where you can apply for student loans or reserve a campground in a national park.

Now, when I first announced in June we would be creating [firstgov.gov](http://firstgov.gov), I promised we would do so in 90 days. That was exactly 90 days ago. I am very proud of the Federal

employees who made this happen in Internet time. And I'm thankful to Dr. Eric Brewer of Inktomi. He's the entrepreneur who, with the help of Federal grants, created one of the private sector's most successful search engine technologies. Out of gratitude and patriotism, he developed and donated the search engine for [firstgov.gov](http://firstgov.gov).

Now this website belongs to the American people. We've included a place for you to suggest improvements, and we're going to keep working on this site and on all of our Government websites. Firstgov symbolizes, I think, the kind of Government we need in the 21st century, one that empowers citizens to make the most of their own lives.

At the dawn of our Republic, Thomas Jefferson said, "America's institutions must move forward hand in hand with the progress of the human mind." Well, today, as the progress of the human mind races ahead, it's vital that we make sure our democratic institutions keep pace. And if we do, we can create a more perfect, more responsive democracy for the information age.

Thanks for logging on.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:10 p.m. from the Roosevelt Room at the White House. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **Statement on the President's Commission on Improving Economic Opportunity in Communities Dependent on Tobacco Production While Protecting Public Health**

*September 22, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign an Executive order establishing a new Commission to improve opportunities for tobacco farmers and their communities while continuing to protect public health. This action builds on the longstanding commitment Vice President Gore and I share to protect our children from